

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SSC-01 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-08 /079 W
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P 121035Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 0490

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, SU
SUBJECT: SUDANESE CABINET RESHUFFLE

REF: KHARTOUM 488

SUMMARY. NIMEIRI'S LATEST CABINET RESHUFFLE HAS BROUGHT MORE TECHNICIANS INTO TOP POSTS, CONSOLIDATED INTERNAL SECURITY APPARATUS AND ENHANCED DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ROLE. CHANGES REFLECT NUMBER COMPROMISES BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND MANSOUR KHALID WHOSE COMBINED INFLUENCE WITH NIMEIRI IS SHOWN TO BE CURRENTLY GREATER THAN THAT OF PRESIDENT'S OLD RCC COLLEAGUES. SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES FOR OVERALL GOS POLICIES APPEARS SLIGHT, PARTICULARLY IN AREA FOREIGN AFFAIRS. END SUMMARY.

1. DESPITE NIMEIRI'S DRAMATIC ACTION IN ACCEPTING RESIGNATION ENTIRE CABINET FEB 9, REAPPOINTMENT PRIMIN RASHID AL-TAHR BAKR FEB 10 AND MINISTERIAL CHANGES ANNOUNCED FEB 11 SIGNIFY MORE A RESHUFFLE THAN MAJOR REALIGNMENT. OF 34 MINISTERS AND MINSTATES

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IN OUTGOING CABINET, 18 HAVE KEPT THEIR POSITIONS AND FOUR MORE REMAIN IN OFFICE BUT IN DIFFERENT POSTS. FIVE NEW MINISTERIAL FACES CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS EXPERIENCED TECHNOCRATS. MINFIN KHATIM HAD LONG CAREER IN FINANCE; PLANNING MINISTER MUSTAFA HAS HAD JOB, BUT NOT TITLE, FOR SOME TIME; NEW MINAG ABDALLA RECEIVED DOCTORATE IN AGRICULTURE

FROM UCAL (DAVIS) UNDER AID GRANT; KARAMALLA AL-AWAD
ONCE HEADED PUBLIC SERVICE INSTITUTE PRIOR HIS ABLE
STINT AS GOVERNOR RED SEA PROVINCE; AND NEW ATTORNEY
GENERAL OMAR IS EXPERIENCED LAWYER. APPOINTMENT
MOHAMED HASHIM AWAD AS MINCOOPERATIVES IS BOW
IN DIRECTION SSU CAREERISTS BUT HARDLY PLUM ASSIGNMENT
VIEW COMPLEX AND POLITICALLY SENSITIVE NATURE WHOLE
COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

2. MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED IN AREAS
PUBLIC SECURITY AND FINANCE/PLANNING. IN FORMER,
CAPABLE, ANTI-COMMUNIST HEAD PUBLIC SECURITY
ORGANIZATION, ABDEL WAHAB IBRAHIM, WAS NAMED
MININT BUT WILL RETAIN HIS PSO HAT. HIS PREDECESSOR,
MAJOR (RET) MAMOUN ABU ZEID, HAS BEEN DOWNGRADED TO
MINLOCAL GOVERNMENT BUT WILL REMAIN EX OFFICIO
MEMBER NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL IN HIS NEW POST.
RESULT SHOULD BE EVEN CLOSER COORDINATION INTERNAL
SECURITY THAN HERETOFORE, AN OBVIOUS DESIDERATUM
IN LIGHT LAST SUMMER'S ATTEMPTED COUP AND MORE
RECENT ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS. OVER-ARCHING
ROLE FINMIN HAS BEEN CUT BACK WITH ESTABLISHMENT
SEPARATE PLANNING PORTFOLIO AND ELIMINATION TWO OF
THREE MINSTATES FOR FINANCE. THIS SHOULD
MODESTLY ACCENT VOICE OF DEVELOPMENT IN GOS
COUNCILS AT EXPENSE TRADITIONAL BUDGETEERS.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT LEAVES NUMBER QUESTIONS UNANSWERED,
NOTABLY IN CREATING TWO NEW MINSTATES FOR CABINET
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AFFAIRS, MOHAMMED TAHIR AND MAHMOUD GAMAA, AND ONE
NEW MINSTATE AT PRESIDENCY, HASSAN ABDIN. EMBASSY
HAS NO INFO RE FIRST PAIR, BUT ABDIN WAS JUST
NAMED SSU SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION. HIS
NEW CABINET POST RESTORES ONE PRESIDENTIAL POSITION
WHICH LAPSED WHEN PRIMINISTER FIRST APPOINTED LAST
AUGUST. EXACTLY WHAT ROLE THESE THREE NEW FUNCTIONARIES
WILL FILL HAS NOT BEEN MADE CLEAR.

4. CABINET CHANGES CAN BE READ BOTH AS COMPROMISE
BETWEEN NIMEIRI'S TWO LEADING--AND COMPETING--
CIVILIAN ADVISORS, PRIMIN BAKR AND NEW FONMIN
KHALID, AS WELL AS INDICATION THAT THESE TWO
EXERCISE MORE INFLUENCE OVER NIMEIRI AT PRESENT
THAN HIS FORMER RCC COLLEAGUES, AS LONG AS
THEY THEMSELVES CAN AGREE. FOR EXAMPLE,
WHILE PRIMIN FAILED INDUCE NIMEIRI AND KHALID
LET HIM RETAIN BIHEIRY AS FINMIN, COMPROMISE
WAS REACHED UNDER WHICH BEHEIRY REPLACED BY ONE

OF PRIMIN'S RELATIVES BY MARRIAGE (KHATIM) WITH BIHEIRY HIMSELF KEPT ON AT NEW POST OF ECONOMIC ADVISOR TO PRIMIN. BIHEIRY THUS RETAINS SOME INFLUENCE THOUGH HIS DEMOTION SUGGESTS HE MAY BE MADE SCAPEGOAT FOR RECENT CRITICISMS OF COMMERCIAL BANK OPERATIONS. THIS CONNECTION, CHANGES IN TOP BANK JOBS ARE WIDELY RUMORED. DEMOTION ABU ZEID AND FAILURE OTHER EX-RCC TYPES TO ENHANCE THEIR POSITIONS ALSO SHOW STRONG BAKR/KHALID INFLUENCE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 0490

5. ELIMINATION MAKKAWI AS FONMIN REPRESENTS MORE FORM THAN SUBSTANCE. EVER SINCE KHALID BECAME NIMEIRI'S KEY FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISOR LAST SUMMER, MAKKAWI'S ROLE HAS BEEN LARGEY ROUTINE AND CEREMONIAL. GIVEN KHALID'S DISTASTE FOR BUREAUCRATIC ROUTINES AND HIS LOVE OF TRAVEL, WE EXPECT HIM LEAVE ACTUAL ADMINISTRATION FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENG'S CAPABLE, BUT INEXPERIENCED, HANDS. DISAPPEARANCE AL-KHIDIR FROM CABINET AS WELL AS SSU EXECUTIVE BOARD REMOVES INDIVIDUAL WITH CLOSE TIES TO BLOC (HE PRESUMABLY WILL REMAIN SECGEN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND SOLIDARITY) WHO HEADED SPECIAL COURT LAST SUMMER WHICH SENTENCED TOP MAHDISTS TO DEATH IN ABSENTIA. LONG ANTICIPATED DROPPING OF CONTROVERSIAL MININDUSTRY SULIMAN (WHO LIKEWISE ELIMINATED FROM SSU SECRETARIAT) REMOVES FREQUENT OBSTACLE TO PRIVATE ENTREPRENEURIAL PROJECTS HERE WITH WHICH WESTERN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

ASSOCIATED.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESHUFFLE FOR OVERALL GOS POLICIES

APPEARS SLIGHT, PARTICULARLY IN AREA

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, NIMEIRI'S MODERATE ARAB FRIENDS LIKELY BE REASSURED BOTH BY OUTLOOK FOR GREATER INTERNAL SECURITY COORDINATION AND BY FURTHER EROSION IN INFLUENCE OF REGIME'S STATIST AND PRO-LEFTIST ELEMENTS. ONE SOURCE NOTES THAT, IN ADDITION PRIMIN, MINISTERS OF INTERIOR AND EDUCATION, ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND POSSIBLY PUBLIC SERVICE ARE MOSLEM BRETHREN, PLUS SEVERAL MINSTATES. THIS ALSO SUGGESTS BAKR'S INFLUENCE PREVAILED OVER EX-RCC TYPES AND GIVES CABINET MORE CONSERVATIVE CAST WHICH SHOULD BE WELCOME AMONG SUDAN'S MONIED ARAB NEIGHBORS.

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